

problem. The allegations that indeterminism renders possible a unification of the concept of natural law in all spheres of research, and that it alone vindicates human freedom and aspiration, seem to me unacceptable. But it would take up too much space to deal with them here. Moreover, considering the different meanings which we assign to the term "determinism," it is quite possible that I am in fuller agreement with Professor Fisher's views than may appear on the surface. And I certainly agree with his main contentions in the article under review. It is more definite than are most discussions on indeterminism, and will repay careful reading.

A. WOLF.

## MEDICINE

**Stone, Chester T., M.D.** *The Dangerous Age in Men.* London, 1934. Macmillan & Co. Ltd. Pp. 105. Price 7s. 6d.

Books dealing with health culture and home treatment are on the increase. The motive behind this is good—namely, that men and women should have a better understanding of their bodies and of hygiene, and that the study of disease and of therapeutics should not remain the prerogative of the physician. But this preoccupation with health and disease carries with it a certain danger. Most medical men during their early studies have had the experience of believing that they were the victims of some fatal illness from which in the light of fuller knowledge they discovered that they were happily free. How much more likely is a layman, in reading of the early signs of a disease, to discover in himself symptoms that suggest that he is suffering from it.

Take for example Dr. Chester T. Stone's chapter on enlarged prostate. "Every man approaching the age of fifty is particularly interested in knowing what his chances are of escaping true enlargement or hypertrophy of the prostate gland." Earlier in the book the reader has been informed that "medical

authors have variously estimated that from 35-90 per cent. of adult males have trouble with the prostate gland." With this knowledge, the reader of fifty or over must feel that his chances of escaping enlargement are somewhat poor. Turning the pages anxiously he learns that early symptoms are attacks of "frequent urination, burning when passing the urine and perhaps some tenesmus (strain) and pain." There are few people who have not suffered at one time from an over-frequent desire to urinate. Should the reader feel at all nervous and dwell upon this fact, frequency will automatically occur. Anxiety may often be productive of pain and tenesmus and, with very little difficulty, from reading of the symptoms a man may pass to a practical knowledge of them.

This is no theoretical objection to the production of medical literature for the laity. The reviewer himself has had the experience of interviewing lay readers of his own medical works in the consulting room and of discovering that inadvertently he has been responsible for the production of a neurosis. So also may Dr. Chester Stone find it necessary to deal in the future with a considerable number of elderly men who have become unhealthily introspective about the state of their prostates.

If, however, it is agreed that books on disease are on the whole beneficial to the public, then we have no hesitation in saying that Dr. Stone's work on the dangerous age in men is an excellent example of this form of literature. With the advice that it gives no one can quarrel: "A car owner, if he is a careful man, takes his machine to an expert at the first sign of trouble. He does not let the pistons rust tight in the cylinders, the generators become corroded or the batteries run down and then expect to pass everything on the road. He prefers to keep his present machine working at a maximum efficiency. It is strange but true that this same man will neglect his own body."

Since this is a work which deals primarily with the prostate, it is natural that the author should lay stress on the importance of living a normal and healthy sex life. This is good advice. At the same time urologists are

by no means in agreement that irregularities of sex, either in the direction of over-indulgence or starvation, have any direct bearing on the condition of prostatic enlargement. Indeed it is the opinion of the reviewer that a man can do little, if anything, to reduce his chances of becoming in later life the victim of prostatic enlargement. The

reading of *The Dangerous Age in Men* may therefore perform the useful function of urging one who has already signs of enlargement to seek timely advice, but it cannot help, in the reviewer's opinion, one who in the future may develop this trouble but as yet shows no signs of it.

KENNETH WALKER.



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